

Biography of Some Noble Sahabaah

Best book of Islamic Info

## **Adiyy Ibn Hatim RA**

### **Adiyy Ibn Hatim RA**

In the ninth year of the Hijrah, an Arab king made the first positive moves to Islam after years of feeling hatred for it. He drew closer to faith (iman) after opposing and combating it. And he finally pledged allegiance to the Prophet, peace be on him, after his adamant refusal to do so.

He was Adiyy, son of the famous Hatim at-Taai who was known far and wide for his chivalry and fabulous generosity. Adiyy inherited the domain of his father and was confirmed in the position by the Tayy people. Part of his strength lay in the fact that a quarter of any amount they obtained as booty from raiding expeditions had to be given to him.

When the Prophet announced openly his call to guidance and truth and Arabs from one region after another accepted his teachings, Adiyy saw in his mission a threat to his position and leadership. Although he did not know the Prophet personally, and had never seen him, he developed strong feelings of enmity towards him. He remained antagonistic to Islam for close upon twenty years until at last God opened his heart to the religion of truth and guidance.

The way in which Adiyy became a Muslim is a remarkable story and he is perhaps the best person to relate it. He said:

"There was no man among the Arabs who detested God's Messenger, may God bless him and grant him peace, more than I, when I heard about him. I was then a man of status and nobility. I was a Christian. From my people I took a fourth of their booty as was the practice of other Arab kings.

When I heard of the Messenger of God, peace be on him, I hated him. When his mission grew in strength and when his power increased and his armies and expeditionary forces dominated east and west of the land of Arabs, I said to a servant of mine who looked after my camels:

'Get ready a fat camel for me which is easy to ride and tether it close to me. If you hear of an army or an expeditionary force of Muhammad coming towards this land,

let me know.' One evening, my servant came to me and said:  
"Yaa Mawlaya! What you intended to do on the approach of Muhammad's cavalry to your land, do it now." 'Why? May your mother lose you!' 'I have seen scouts searching close to the habitations. I asked about them and was told that they belonged to the army of Muhammad,' he said.

'Bring the camel which I ordered you to get ready.' I said to him. I got up then and there, summoned my household (including) my children and ordered them to evacuate the land we loved. We headed in the direction of Syria to join people of our own faith among the Christians and settle among them.

We left in too much haste for me to gather together our entire household. When I took stock of our situation, I discovered that part of my family was missing. I had left my own sister in our Najd homelands together with the rest of the Tayy people. I did not have any means to return to her. So I went on with those who were with me until I reached Syria and took up residence there among people of my own religion. As for my sister, what I feared for her happened.

News reached me while I was in Syria that the forces of Muhammad entered our habitations and took my sister together with a number of other captives to Yathrib. There she was placed with other captives in a compound near the door of the Masjid.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, passed by her. She stood up before him and said: 'Yaa Rasulullah! My father is dead and my guardian is not here. Be gracious to me and God will be gracious to you.' 'And who is your guardian?' asked the Prophet. 'Adiyy ibn Hatim.' she said. 'The one who fled from God and His Prophet?' he asked. He then left her and walked on.

On the following day, the same thing happened. She spoke to him just as she did the day before and he replied in the same manner.

The next day, the same thing happened and she despaired of getting any concession from him for he did not say anything. Then a man from behind him indicated that she should stand up and talk to him. She therefore stood up and said:

'O Messenger of God! My father is dead and my guardian is absent. Be gracious to me and God will be gracious to you.' I have agreed he said. Turning to those about him, he instructed: likewise 'Let her go for her father loved noble ways, and God loves them.' 'I want to join my family in Syria,' she said.

"But don't leave in a hurry," said the Prophet, "until you find someone you can trust from your people who could accompany you to Syria. If you find a trustworthy person, let me know."

When the Prophet left, she asked about the man who had suggested that she speak to the Prophet and was told that he was Ali ibn Abi Talib, may God be pleased with him. She stayed in Yathrib until a group arrived among whom was someone she could trust. So she went the Prophet and said:

'O Messenger of God! A group of my people have come to me and among them is one I can trust who could take me to my family.'

The Prophet, peace be on him, gave her fine clothes and an adequate sum of money. He also gave her a camel and she left with the group. Thereafter we followed her progress gradually and waited for her return. We could hardly believe what we heard about Muhammad's generosity towards her in spite of my attitude to him. By God, I am a leader of my people. When I beheld a woman in herhawdaj coming towards us, I said: 'The daughter of Hatim! It's she! It's she!'

When she stood before us, she snapped sharply at me and said: 'The one who severs the tie of kinship is a wrongdoer. You took your family and your children and left the rest of your relations and those whom you ought to have protected.'

'Yes, my sister,' I said, 'don't say anything but good.' I tried to pacify her until she was satisfied. She told me what had happened to her and it was as I had heard. Then I asked her, for she was an intelligent and judicious person:

"What do you think of the mission of this man (meaning Muhammad peace be on him)?" "I think, by God, that you should join him quickly." she said. "If he is a Prophet, file one who hastens towards him would enjoy his grace. And if he is a king, you would not be disgraced in his sight while you are as you are."

I immediately prepared myself for travel and set off to meet the Prophet in Madinah without any security and without any letter. I had heard that he had said: 'I certainly wish that God will place the hand of Adiyy in my hand.'

I went up to him. He was in the Masjid. I greeted him and he said: 'Who is the man?' 'Adiyy ibn Hatim,' I said. He stood up for me, took me by the hand and set off towards his home.

By God, as he was walking with me towards his house, a weak old woman met him. With her was a young child. She stopped him and began talking to him about a problem. I was standing (all the while). I said to myself: 'By God, this is no king.'

He then took me by the hand and went with me until we reached his home. There he got a leather cushion filled with palm fibre, gave it to me said: 'Sit on this!'

I felt embarrassed before him and said: 'Rather, you sit on it.' 'No, you,' he said.

I deferred and sat on it. The Prophet, peace be on him, sat on the floor because

there was no other cushion. said to myself:

'By God, this is not the manner of a king!' He then turned to me and said: 'Yes, Adiyy ibn Hatim! Haven't you been a "Rukusi" professing a religion between Christianity and Sabeanism?' 'Yes,' I replied.

'Did you not operate among your people on the principle of exacting from them a fourth, taking from them what your religion does not allow you?'

'Yes,' I said, and I knew from that he was a Prophet sent (by God). Then he said to me: 'Perhaps, O Adiyy, the only thing that prevents you from entering this religion is what you see of the destitution of the Muslims and their poverty. By God, the time is near when wealth would flow among them until no one could be found to take it.

'Perhaps, O Adiyy, the only thing that prevents you from entering this religion is what you see of the small number of Muslims and their numerous foe. By God, the time is near when you would hear of the woman setting out from Qadisiyyah on her camel until she reaches this house, not fearing anyone except Allah.

'Perhaps what prevents you from entering this religion is that you only see that sovereignty and power rest in the hands of those who are not Muslims. By God, you will soon hear of the white palaces of the land of Babylon opening up for them and the treasures of Chosroes the son of Hormuz fall to their lot.'

'The treasures of Chosroes the son of Hormuz?' I asked (incredulously). 'Yes, the treasures of Chosroes the son of Hormuz,' he said. Thereupon, I professed the testimony of truth, and declared my acceptance of Islam."

One report says that when Adiyy saw the simplicity of the Prophet's life-style, he said to him: "I testify that you do not seek high office in this world nor corruption," and he announced his acceptance of Islam. Some people observed the Prophet's treatment of Adiyy and said to him:

"O Prophet of God! We have seen you do something which you have not done to any other." "Yes," replied the Prophet. "This is a man of stature among his people. If such a person come to you, treat him honorably."

Adiyy ibn Hatim, may God be pleased with him, lived for a long time. He later said: "Two of the things (which the Prophet spoke of) came to pass and there remained a third. By God, it would certainly come to pass. "I have seen the woman leaving Qadisiyyah on her camel fearing nothing until she arrived at this house (of the Prophet in Madinah).

"I myself was in the vanguard of the cavalry which descended on the treasures of Chosroes and took them. And I swear by God that the third event will be realized." Through the will of God, the third statement of the Prophet, on him be choicest blessings and peace, came to pass during the time of the devout and ascetic

Khalifah, Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz. Wealth flowed among the Muslims so much so that when the town-criers called on people throughout the Muslim domain to come and collect Zakat, no one was found in need to respond.

## **Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl**

**He was at the end of the third decade of his life on the day the Prophet made public his call to guidance and truth. He was held in high regard by the Quraysh, being wealthy and of noble lineage. Some others like him, Saud ibn Abi Waqqas, Musab ibn Umayr and other sons of noble families in Makkah had become Muslims. He too might have followed their example were it not for his father. His father, Abu Jahl, was the foremost proponent of Shirk and one of the greatest tyrants of Makkah. Through torture, he sorely tested the faith of the early believers but they remained steadfast. He used every stratagem to make them waver but they continued to affirm the truth.**

Ikrimah found himself defending the leadership and authority of his father as he pitted himself against the Prophet. His animosity towards the Prophet, his persecution of his followers and his attempts to block the progress of Islam and the Muslims won the admiration of his father.

At Badr, Abu Jahl led the Makkan polytheists in the battle against the Muslims. He swore by al-Laat and al-Uzza that he would not return to Makkah unless he crushed Muhammad. At Badr he sacrificed three camels to these goddesses. He drank wine and had the music of singing girls to spur the Quraysh on to fight.

Abu Jahl was among the first to fall in the battle. His son Ikrimah saw him as spears pierced his body and heard him let out his last cry of agony. Ikrimah returned to Makkah leaving behind the corpse of the Quraysh chieftain, his father. He wanted to bury him in Makkah but the crushing defeat they suffered made this impossible.

From that day, the fire of hatred burned even more fiercely in the heart of Ikrimah. Others whose fathers were killed at Badr, also became more hostile to Muhammad and his followers. This eventually led to the Battle of Uhud.

At Uhud Ikrimah was accompanied by his wife, Umm Hakim. She and other women stood behind the battle lines beating their drums, urging the Quraysh on to battle and upbraiding any horseman who felt inclined to flee.

Leading the right flank of the Quraysh was Khalid ibn Walid. On the left was Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl. The Quraysh inflicted heavy losses on the Muslims and felt that they had avenged themselves for the defeat at Badr. This was not, however, the end of the state of conflict.

At the battle of the Ditch, the Quraysh mushrikun besieged Madinah. It was a long siege. The resources and the patience of the mushrikun were wearing out. Ikrimah, feeling the strain of the siege, saw a place where the ditch, dug by the Muslims, was relatively narrow. With a gigantic effort, he managed to cross. A small group of Quraysh followed him. It was a foolhardy undertaking. One of them was immediately killed and it was only by turning on his heels that Ikrimah managed to save himself.

Nine years after his hijrah, the Prophet returned with thousands of his companions to Makkah. The Quraysh saw them approaching and decided to leave the way open for them because they knew that the Prophet had given instructions to his commanders not to open hostilities. Ikrimah and some others however went against the consensus of the Quraysh and attempted to block the progress of the Muslim forces. Khalid ibn al-Walid, now a Muslim, met and defeated them in a small engagement during which some of Ikrimah's men were killed and others who could fled. Among those who escaped was Ikrimah himself.

Any standing or influence that Ikrimah may have had was now completely destroyed. The Prophet, peace be upon him, entered Makkah and gave a general pardon and amnesty to all Quraysh who entered the sacred mosque, or who stayed in their houses or who went to the house of Abu Sufyan, the paramount Quraysh leader. However he refused to grant amnesty to a few individuals whom he named. He gave orders that they should be killed even if they were found under the covering of the Kabah. At the top of this list was Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl. When Ikrimah learnt of this, he slipped out of Makkah in disguise and headed for the Yemen.

Umm Hakim, Ikrimah's wife, then went to the camp of the Prophet. With her was Hind bint Utbah, the wife of Abu Sufyan and the mother of Muawiyah, and about ten other women who wanted to pledge allegiance to the Prophet. At the camp, were two of his wives, his daughter Fatimah and some women of the Abdulmuttalib clan. Hind was the one who spoke. She was veiled and ashamed of what she had done to Hamzah, the Prophet's uncle, at the battle of Uhud.

"O Messenger of God," she said, "Praise be to God Who has made manifest the religion He has chosen for Himself. I beseech you out of the bonds of kinship to treat me well. I am now a believing woman who affirms the Truth of your mission." She then unveiled herself and said:

"I am Hind, the daughter of Utbah, O Messenger of God. "

"Welcome to you," replied the Prophet, peace be on him.

"By God, O Prophet" continued Hind, "there was not a house on earth that I wanted to destroy more than your house. Now, there is no house on earth that I so dearly wish to honor and raise in glory than yours."

Umm Hakim then got up and professed her faith in Islam and said: "O Messenger of God, Ikrimah has fled from you to the Yemen out of fear that you would kill him. Grant him security and God will grant you security."

"He is secure," promised the Prophet. Umm Hakim set out immediately in search of Ikrimah. Accompanying her was a Greek slave. When they had gone quite far on the way, he tried to seduce her but she managed to put him off until she came to a settlement of Arabs. She sought their help against him. They tied him up and kept him. Umm Hakim continued on her way until she finally found Ikrimah on the coast of the Red Sea in the region of Tihamah. He was negotiating transport with a Muslim seaman who was saying to him:

"Be pure and sincere and I will transport you."

"How can I be pure?" asked Ikrimah.

"Say, I testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

"I have fled from this very thing," said Ikrimah.

At this point, Umm Hakim came up to Ikrimah and said:

"O cousin, I have come to you from the most generous of men, the most righteous of men, the best of men... from Muhammad ibn Abdullah. I have asked him for an amnesty for you. This he has granted. So do not destroy yourself. "

"Have you spoken to him?"

"Yes, I have spoken to him and he has granted you amnesty," she assured him and he returned with her. She told him about the attempt of their Greek slave to dishonor her and Ikrimah went directly to the Arab settlement where he lay bound and killed him.

At one of their resting places on their way back, Ikrimah wanted to sleep with his wife but she vehemently refused and said:

"I am a Muslimah and you are a Mushrik."

Ikrimah was totally taken aback and said, "Living without you and without your

sleeping with me is an impossible situation." As Ikrimah approached Makkah, the Prophet, peace be upon him, told his companions: "Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl shall come to you as a believer and a muhajir (a refugee). Do not insult his father. Insulting the dead causes grief to the living and does not reach the dead."

Ikrimah and his wife came up to where the Prophet was sitting. The Prophet got up and greeted him enthusiastically.

"Muhammad," said Ikrimah, "Umm Hakim has told me that you have granted me an amnesty."

"That's right," said the Prophet, "You are safe."

"To what do you invite?" asked Ikrimah.

"I invite you to testify that there is no god but Allah and that I am the servant of Allah and His messenger, to establish Prayer and pay the Zakat and carry out all the other obligations of Islam."

"By God," responded Ikrimah, "You have only called to what is true and you have only commanded that which is good. You lived among us before the start of your mission and then you were the most trustworthy of us in speech and the most righteous of us." Stretching forth his hands he said, "I testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and His messenger." The Prophet then instructed him to say, "I call on God and those present here to witness that I am a Muslim who is a Mujahid and a Muhajir". This Ikrimah repeated and then said:

"I ask you to ask God for forgiveness for me for all the hostility I directed against you and for whatever insults I expressed in your presence or absence." The Prophet replied with the prayer:

"O Lord, forgive him for all the hostility he directed against me and from all the expeditions he mounted wishing to put out Your light. Forgive him for whatever he has said or done in my presence or absence to dishonor me."

Ikrimah's face beamed with happiness.

"By God, O messenger of Allah, I promise that whatever I have spent obstructing the way of God, I shall spend twice as much in His path and whatever battles I have fought against God's way I shall fight twice as much in His way."

From that day on, Ikrimah was committed to the mission of Islam as brave horseman in the field of battle and as a steadfast worshiper who would spend much time in mosques reading the book of God. Often he would place the mushaf on his face and say, "The Book of my Lord, the words of my Lord" and he would cry from the fear of God.

Ikrimah remained true to his pledge to the Prophet. Whatever battles the Muslims engaged in thereafter, he participated in them and he was always in the vanguard of the army. At the battle of Yarmuk he plunged into the attack as a thirsty person after cold water on a blistering hot day. In one encounter in which the Muslims were under heavy attack, Ikrimah penetrated deep into the ranks of the Byzantine. Khalid ibn al-Walid rushed up to him and said, "Don't, Ikrimah. Your death will be a severe blow to the Muslims."

"Let us carry on, Khalid," said Ikrimah, now at the peak of motivation. "You had the privilege of being with the Messenger of God before this. As for myself and my father, we were among his bitterest enemies. Leave me now to atone for what I have done in the past. I fought the Prophet on many occasions. Shall I now flee from the Byzantines? This shall never be." Then calling out to the Muslims, he shouted, "Who shall pledge to fight until death?"

Four hundred Muslims including al-Harith ibn Hisham and Ayyash ibn Abi Rabiah responded to his call. They plunged into the battle and fought heroically without the leadership of Khalid ibn al-Walid. Their daring attack paved the way for a decisive Muslim victory.

When the battle was over, the bodies of three wounded mujahideen lay sprawled on the battleground, among them Al-Harith ibn Hisham, Ayyash ibn Abi Rabiah and Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl. Al-Harith called for water to drink. As it was brought to him, Ayyash looked at him and Harith said:

"Give it to Ayyash." By the time they got to Ayyash, he had just breathed his last. When they returned to al-Harith and Ikrimah, they found that they too had passed away.

The companions prayed that God may be pleased with them all and grant them refreshment from the spring of Kawthar in Paradise, a refreshment after which there is thirst no more.

## **Aisha Bint Abi Bakr RA**

### **Aaesha Bint Abi Bakr RA**

The life of Aishah is proof that a woman can be far more learned than men and that she can be the teacher of scholars and experts. Her life is also proof that a woman can exert influence over men and women and provide them with inspiration and leadership. Her life is also proof that the same woman can be totally feminine and be a source of pleasure, joy and comfort to her husband.

She did not graduate from any university there were no universities as such in her day. But still her utterances are studied in faculties of literature, her legal pronouncements are studied in colleges of law and her life and works are studied and researched by students and teachers of Muslim history as they have been for over a thousand years.

The bulk of her vast treasure of knowledge was obtained while she was still quite young. In her early childhood she was brought up by her father who was greatly liked and respected for he was a man of wide knowledge, gentle manners and an agreeable presence. Moreover he was the closest friend of the noble Prophet who was a frequent visitor to their home since the very early days of his mission.

In her youth, already known for her striking beauty and her formidable memory, she came under the loving care and attention of the Prophet himself. As his wife and close companion she acquired from him knowledge and insight such as no woman has ever acquired.

Aishah became the Prophet's wife in Makkah when she was most likely in the tenth year of her life but her wedding did not take place until the second year after the Hijrah when she was about fourteen or fifteen years old. Before and after her wedding she maintained a natural jollity and innocence and did not seem at all overawed by the thought of being wedded to him who was the Messenger of God whom all his companions, including her own mother and father, treated with such love and reverence as they gave to no one else.

About her wedding, she related that shortly before she was to leave her parent's house, she slipped out into the courtyard to play with a passing friend:

"I was playing on a see-saw and my long streaming hair was dishevelled," she said. "They came and took me from my play and made me ready."

They dressed her in a wedding-dress made from fine red-striped cloth from Bahrain and then her mother took her to the newly-built house where some women of the Ansar were waiting outside the door. They greeted her with the words "For good and for happiness may all be well!"

Then, in the presence of the smiling Prophet, a bowl of milk was brought. The Prophet drank from it himself and offered it to Aishah. She shyly declined it but when he insisted she did so and then offered the bowl to her sister Asma who was sitting beside her. Others also drank of it and that was as much as there was of the simple and solemn occasion of their wedding. There was no wedding feast.

Marriage to the Prophet did not change her playful ways. Her young friends came regularly to visit her in her own apartment.

"I would be playing with my dolls," she said, "with the girls who were my friends,

and the Prophet would come in and they would slip out of the house and he would go out after them and bring them back, for he was pleased for my sake to have them there." Sometimes he would say "Stay where you are" before they had time to leave, and would also join in their games. Aishah said: "One day, the Prophet came in when I was playing with the dolls and he said: 'O Aishah, whatever game is this?' 'It is Solomon's horses,' I said and he laughed." Sometimes as he came in he would screen himself with his cloak so as not to disturb Aishah and her friends.

Aishah's early life in Madinah also had its more serious and anxious times. Once her father and two companions who were staying with him fell ill with a dangerous fever which was common in Madinah at certain seasons. One morning Aishah went to visit him and was dismayed to find the three men lying completely weak and exhausted. She asked her father how he was and he answered her in verse but she did not understand what he was saying. The two others also answered her with lines of poetry which seemed to her to be nothing but unintelligible babbling. She was deeply troubled and went home to the Prophet saying:

"They are raving, out of their minds, through the heat of the fever." The Prophet asked what they had said and was somewhat reassured when she repeated almost word for word the lines they had uttered and which made sense although she did not fully understand them then. This was a demonstration of the great retentive power of her memory which as the years went by were to preserve so many of the priceless sayings of the Prophet.

Of the Prophet's wives in Madinah, it was clear that it was Aishah that he loved most. From time to time, one or the other of his companions would ask:

"O Messenger of God, whom do you love most in the world?" He did not always give the same answer to this question for he felt great love for many for his daughters and their children, for Abu Bakr, for Ali, for Zayd and his son Usamah. But of his wives the only one he named in this connection was Aishah. She too loved him greatly in return and often would seek reassurance from him that he loved her. Once she asked him: "How is your love for me?"

"Like the rope's knot," he replied meaning that it was strong and secure. And time after time thereafter, she would ask him: "How is the knot?" and he would reply: "Ala haaliha in the same condition."

As she loved the Prophet so was her love a jealous love and she could not bear the thought that the Prophet's attentions should be given to others more than seemed enough to her. She asked him:

"O Messenger of God, tell me of yourself. If you were between the two slopes of a valley, one of which had not been grazed whereas the other had been grazed, on which would you pasture your flocks?"

"On that which had not been grazed," replied the Prophet. "Even so," she said, "and I am not as any other of your wives. "Everyone of them had a husband before you, except myself." The Prophet smiled and said nothing. Of her jealousy, Aishah would say in later years:

"I was not, jealous of any other wife of the Prophet as I was jealous of Khadijah, because of his constant mentioning of her and because God had commanded him to give her good tidings of a mansion in Paradise of precious stones. And whenever he sacrificed a sheep he would send a fair portion of it to those who had been her intimate friends. Many a time I said to him: "It is as if there had never been any other woman in the world except Khadijah."

Once, when Aishah complained and asked why he spoke so highly of "an old Quraysh woman", the Prophet was hurt and said: "She was the wife who believed in me when others rejected me. When people gave me the lie, she affirmed my truthfulness. When I stood forsaken, she spent her wealth to lighten the burden of my sorrow.."

Despite her feelings of jealousy which nonetheless were not of a destructive kind, Aishah was really a generous soul and a patient one. She bore with the rest of the Prophet's household poverty and hunger which often lasted for long periods. For days on end no fire would be lit in the sparsely furnished house of the Prophet for cooking or baking bread and they would live merely on dates and water. Poverty did not cause her distress or humiliation; self-sufficiency when it did come did not corrupt her style of life.

Once the Prophet stayed away from his wives for a month because they had distressed him by asking of him that which he did not have. This was after the Khaybar expedition when an increase of riches whetted the appetite for presents. Returning from his self-imposed retreat, he went first to Aishah's apartment. She was delighted to see him but he said he had received Revelation which required him to put two options before her. He then recited the verses:

"O Prophet! Say to your wives: If you desire the life of this world and its adornments, then come and I will bestow its goods upon you, and I will release you with a fair release. But if you desire God and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter, then verily God has laid in store for you an immense reward for such as you who do good."

Aishah's reply was:

"Indeed I desire God and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter," and her response was followed by all the others.

She stuck to her choice both during the lifetime of the Prophet and afterwards. Later when the Muslims were favored with enormous riches, she was given a gift of one hundred thousand dirhams. She was fasting when she received the money and she distributed the entire amount to the poor and the needy even though she had

no provisions in her house. Shortly after, a maidservant said to her: "Could you buy meat for a dirham with which to break your fast?"

"If I had remembered, I would have done so," she said. The Prophet's affection for Aishah remained to the last. During his final illness, it was to Aishah's apartment that he went at the suggestion of his wives. For much of the time he lay there on a couch with his head resting on her breast or on her lap. She it was who took a toothstick from her brother, chewed upon it to soften it and gave it to the Prophet. Despite his weakness, he rubbed his teeth with it vigorously. Not long afterwards, he lost consciousness and Aishah thought it was the onset of death, but after an hour he opened his eyes.

Aishah it is who has preserved for us these dying moments of the most honoured of God's creation, His beloved Messenger may He shower His choicest blessings on him.

When he opened his eyes again, Aishah remembered Iris having said to her: "No Prophet is taken by death until he has been shown his place in Paradise and then offered the choice, to live or die."

"He will not now choose us," she said to herself. Then she heard him murmur: "With the supreme communion in Paradise, with those upon whom God has showered His favor, the Prophets, the martyrs and the righteous..." Again she heard him murmur: "O Lord, with the supreme communion," and these were the last words she heard him speak. Gradually his head grew heavier upon her breast, until others in the room began to lament, and Aishah laid his head on a pillow and joined them in lamentation.

In the floor of Aishah's room near the couch where he was lying, a grave was dug in which was buried the Seal of the Prophets amid much bewilderment and great sorrow.

Aishah lived on almost fifty years after the passing away of the Prophet. She had been his wife for a decade. Much of this time was spent in learning and acquiring knowledge of the two most important sources of God's guidance, the Quran and the Sunnah of His Prophet. Aishah was one of three wives (the other two being Hafsa and Umm Salamah) who memorized the Revelation.

Like Hafsa, she had her own script of the Quran written after the Prophet had died.

So far as the Ahadith or sayings of the Prophet is concerned, Aishah is one of four persons (the others being Abu Hurayrah, Abdullah ibn Umar, and Anas ibn Malik) who transmitted more than two thousand sayings. Many of these pertain to some of the most intimate aspects of personal behavior which only someone in Aishah's position could have learnt. What is most important is that her knowledge of hadith was passed on in written form by at least three persons including her nephew Urwah who became one of the greatest scholars among the generation after the Companions.

Many of the learned companions of the Prophet and their followers benefitted from Aishah's knowledge. Abu Musa al-Ashari once said: "If we companions of the Messenger of God had any difficulty on a matter, we asked Aishah about it."

Her nephew Urwah asserts that she was proficient not only in fiqh but also in medicine (tibb) and poetry. Many of the senior companions of the Prophet came to her to ask for advice concerning questions of inheritance which required a highly skilled mathematical mind. Scholars regard her as one of the earliest fuqaha of Islam along with persons like Umar ibn al-Khattab, Ali and Abdullah ibn Abbas. The Prophet referring to her extensive knowledge of Islam is reported to have said: "Learn a portion of your religion (din) from this red colored lady." "Humayra" meaning "Red-coloured" was an epithet given to Aishah by the Prophet.

Aishah not only possessed great knowledge but took an active part in education and social reform. As a teacher she had a clear and persuasive manner of speech and her power of oratory has been described in superlative terms by al-Ahnaf who said: "I have heard speeches of Abu Bakr and Umar, Uthman and Ali and the Khulafa up to this day, but I have not heard speech more persuasive and more beautiful from the mouth of any person than from the mouth of Aishah."

Men and women came from far and wide to benefit from her knowledge. The number of women is said to have been greater than that of men. Besides answering enquiries, she took boys and girls, some of them orphans, into her custody and trained them under her care and guidance. This was in addition to her relatives who received instruction from her. Her house thus became a school and an academy.

Some of her students were outstanding. We have already mentioned her nephew Urwah as a distinguished reporter of hadith. Among her women pupils is the name of Umrah bint Abdur Rahman. She is regarded by scholars as one of the trustworthy narrators of hadith and is said to have acted as Aishah's secretary receiving and replying to letters addressed to her. The example of Aishah in promoting education and in particular the education of Muslim women in the laws and teachings of Islam is one which needs to be followed.

After Khadijah al-Kubra (the Great) and Fatimah az-Zahra (the Resplendent), Aishah as-Siddiqah (the one who affirms the Truth) is regarded as the best woman in Islam. Because of the strength of her personality, she was a leader in every field in knowledge, in society, in politics and in war. She often regretted her involvement in war but lived long enough to regain position as the most respected woman of her time. She died in the year 58 AH in the month of Ramadan and as she instructed, was buried in the Jannat al-Baqi in the City of Light, beside other companions of the Prophet

**Al-Baraa ibn Malik al-Ansari**

### **Al-Baraa ibn Malik al-Ansari**

His hair looked dishevelled and his whole appearance was unkempt. He was thin and wiry with so little flesh on his bones that it was painful to look at him. Yet in single handed combat he defeated and killed many opponents and in the thick of battle he was an outstanding fighter against the mushrikeen. He was so courageous and daring that Umar once wrote to his governors throughout the Islamic state that they should not appoint him to lead any army out of fear that he would have them all killed by his daring exploits. This man was al-Baraa ibn Malik al-Ansari, the brother of Anas ibn Malik, the personal aide of the Prophet. If the tales of Baraa's heroism were to be told in detail pages and pages could be written. But let one example suffice. This particular story begins only hours after the death of the noble Prophet when many Arabian tribes took to leaving the religion of God in large numbers, just as they had entered it in large numbers. Within a short space of time only the people of Makkah, Madinah and Taif and scattered communities here and there, whose commitment to Islam was unwavering, remained within the religion. Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, the successor to the Prophet, stood firm against this blind and destructive movement. From the Muhajireen and Ansar, he mobilized eleven armies each under a separate commander and dispatched them to various parts of the Arabian peninsula. Their purpose was to make the apostates return to the path of guidance and truth and to confront the leaders of the rebellion. The strongest group of apostates and the greatest in number were the Banu Hanifah among whom Musaylamah the Impostor arose, claiming that he was a prophet. Musaylamah managed to mobilize forty thousand of the best fighters among his people. Most of these however followed him for the sake of Allah or tribal loyalty and not because they believed in him. One of them in fact said, "I testify that Musaylamah is an impostor and that Muhammad is true but the impostor of Rabiah (Musaylamah) is dearer to us than the true man of Mudar (Muhammad)".

"Musaylamah routed the first army sent against him under the leadership of Ikrimah ibn Abi Jahl. Abu Bakr dispatched another army against Musaylamah led by Khalid ibn al-Walid. This army included the cream of the Sahabah from both the Ansar and the Muhajireen. In the front ranks of this army was Baraa ibn Malik and a group of the most valiant Muslims. The two armies met in the territory of the Banu Hanifah at Yamamah in Najd. Before long, the scale of battle tilted in favor of Musaylamah and his men. The Muslim armies began to retreat from their positions. Musaylamah's forces even stormed the tent of Khalid ibn Walid and drove him from his position. They would have killed his wife if one of them had not granted her protection. At that point, the Muslims realized in what a perilous situation they were. They were also conscious of the fact that if they were annihilated by Musaylamah, Islam would not be able to stand as a religion and Allah--the One God with whom there is no partner--would not be worshipped in the Arabian peninsula after that. Khalid mustered his forces once more and began reorganizing them. He separated the Muhajireen and the Ansar and kept men from different tribes apart. Each was put under the leadership of one of its own members so that the losses of each group in the battle might be known. The battle raged. There was much destruction and death. The Muslims had not experienced anything like this in all the

wars they had fought before. Musaylamah's men remained firm amidst the tumult, as firm as immovable mountains although many of them had fallen. The Muslims displayed tremendous feats of heroism. Thabit ibn Qays, the standard bearer of the Ansar, dug a pit and planted himself in it and fought until he was killed. The pit he dug turned out to be his grave. Zayd ibn al-Khattab, brother of Umar ibn al-Khattab, may God be pleased with them both, called out to the Muslims: "Men, bite with your jaw teeth, strike the enemy and press on. By God, I shall not speak to you after this until either Musaylamah is defeated or I meet God." He then charged against the enemy and continued fighting until he was killed. Salim, the mawla of Abu Hudhaifah, and standard bearer of the Muhajireen displayed unexpected valor. His people feared that he would show weakness or be too terrified to fight. To them he said, "If you manage to overtake me, what a miserable bearer of the Quran I shall be." He then valiantly plunged into the enemy ranks and eventually fell as a martyr. The bravery of all these, however, wanes in front of the heroism of al-Baraa ibn Malik, may God be pleased with him and with them all. As the battle grew fiercer and fiercer, Khalid turned to al-Baraa and said, "Charge, young man of the Ansar." Al-Baraa turned to his men and said, "O Ansar, let not anyone of you think of returning to Madinah. There is no Madinah for you after this day. There is only Allah, then Paradise." He and the Ansar then launched their attack against the mushrikeen, breaking their ranks and dealing telling blows against them until eventually they began to withdraw. They sought refuge in a garden which later became known in history as The Garden of Death because of the many killed there on that day. The garden was surrounded by high walls. Musaylamah and thousands of his men entered and closed the gates behind them and fortified themselves. From their new positions they began to rain down arrows on the Muslims. The valiant Baraa went forward and addressed his company, "Put me on a shield. Raise the shield on spears and hurl me into the garden near the gate. Either I shall die a martyr or I shall open the gate for you." The thin and wiry al-Baraa was soon sitting on a shield. A number of spears raised the shield and he was thrown into the Garden of Death amongst the multitude of Musaylamah's men. He descended on them like a thunderbolt and continued to fight them in front of the gate. Many fell to his sword and he himself sustained numerous wounds before he could open the gate. The Muslims charged into the Garden of Death through the gates and over the walls. Fighting was bitter and at close quarters and hundreds were killed. Finally the Muslims came upon Musaylamah and he was killed. Al-Baraa was taken in a litter to Madinah. Khalid ibn al-Walid spent a month looking after him and tending his wounds. Eventually his condition improved. Through him the Muslims had gained victory over Musaylamah. In spite of recovering from his wounds, al-Baraa continued to long for the martyrdom which had eluded him at the Garden of Death. He went on fighting in battle after battle hoping to attain his aim. This came at the battle for Tustar in Persia. At Tustar the Persians were besieged in one of their defiant fortresses. The siege was long and when its effects became quite unbearable, they adopted a new tactic. From the walls of the fortress, they began to throw down iron chains at the ends of which were fastened iron hooks which were red hot. Muslims were caught by these hooks and were pulled up either dead or in the agony of death. One of these hooks got hold of Anas ibn Malik, the brother

of al-Baraa. As soon as al-Baraa saw this, he leapt up the wall of the fortress and grabbed the chain which bore his brother and began undoing the hook from his body. His hand began to burn but he did not let go before his brother was released. Baraa himself died during this battle. He had prayed to God to grant him martyrdom.

## **Amr Ibn Al-Jamuh**

### **Amr Ibn Al-Jamuh**

Amr ibn al-Jamuh was one of the leading men in Yathrib in the days of Jahiliyyah. He was the chief of the Banu Salamah and was known to be one of the most generous and valiant persons in the city. One of the privileges of the city's leaders was having an idol to himself in his house. It was hoped that this idol would bless the leader in whatever he did. He was expected to offer sacrifices to it on special occasions and seek its help at times of distress. The idol of Amr was called Manat. He had made it from the most priceless wood. He spent a great deal of time, money and attention looking after it and he anointed it with the most exquisite perfumes. Amr was almost sixty years old when the first rays of the light of Islam began to penetrate the houses of Yathrib. House after house was introduced to the new faith at the hands of Musab ibn Umayr, the first missionary sent out to Yathrib before the hijrah. It was through him that Amr's three sons--Muawwadh, Muadh and Khallad--became Muslims.

One of their contemporaries was the famous Muadh ibn Jabal. Amr's wife, Hind, also accepted Islam with her three sons but Amr himself knew nothing of all this. Hind saw that the people of Yathrib were being won over to Islam and that not one of the leaders of the city remained in shirk except her husband and a few individuals. She loved her husband dearly and was proud of him but she was concerned that he should die in a state of kufr and end up in hell-fire.

During this time, Amr himself began to feel uneasy. He was afraid that his sons would give up the religion of their forefathers and follow the teaching of Musab ibn Umayr who, within a short space of time, had caused many to turn away from idolatry and enter the religion of Muhammad. To his wife, Amr therefore said: "Be careful that your children do not come into contact with this man (meaning Musab ibn Umayr) before we pronounce an opinion on him."

"To hear is to obey," she replied. "But would you like to hear from your son Muadh what he relates from this man?" "Woe to you! Has Muadh turned away from his religion without my knowing?" The good woman felt pity from the old man and said: "Not at all. But he has attended some of the meetings of this missionary and memorized some of the things he teaches." "Tell him to come here," he said. When Muadh came, he ordered: "Let me hear an example of what this man preaches." Muadh recited the Ialah (the Opening Chapter of the Quran): "In the name of God, the most Gracious, the Dispenser of Grace. All praise is due to God alone, the

Sustainer of all the worlds, The most Gracious, the Dispenser of Grace. Lord of the Day of Judgment! You alone do we worship and to You alone do we turn for help. Guide us on the straight way, the way of those upon whom you have bestowed Your blessings, not of those who have been condemned by You, nor of those who go astray." "How perfect are these words, and how beautiful!" exclaimed the father. "Is everything he says like this?" "Yes indeed, father. Do you wish to swear allegiance to him? All your people have already done so" urged Muadh. The old man remained silent from a while and then said, "I shall not do so until I consult Manat and see what he says." "What indeed would Manat say, Father? It is only a piece of wood. It can neither think nor speak." The old man retorted sharply, "I told you, I shall not do anything without him." Later that day, Amr went before Manat. It was the custom of the idolators then to place an old woman behind the idol when they wished to speak to it. She would reply on behalf of the idol, articulating, so they thought, what the idol had inspired her to say. Amr stood before the idol in great awe and addressed profuse praises to it. Then he said: "O Manat no doubt you know that this propagandist who was delegated to come to us from Makkah does not wish evil on anyone but you. He has come only to stop us worshipping you. I do not want to swear allegiance to him in spite of the beautiful words I have heard from him. I have thus come to get your advice. So please advise me." There was no reply from Manat. Amr continued:

"Perhaps you are angry. But up till now, I have done nothing to harm you... Never mind, I shall leave you for a few days to let your anger go away."

Amr's sons knew the extent of their father's dependence on Manat and how with time he had become almost a part of it. They realized however that the idol's place in his heart was being shaken and that they had to help him get rid of Manat. That must be his path to faith in God. One night Amr's sons went with their friend Muadh ibn Jabal to Manat, took the idol from its place and threw it in a cess pit belonging to the Banu Salamah. They returned to their homes with no one knowing anything about what they had done. When Amr woke up the following morning, he went in quiet reverence to pay his respects to his idol but did not find it. "Woe to you all," he shouted. "Who has attacked our god last night?" There was no reply from anyone. He began to search for the idol, fuming with rage and threatening the perpetrators of the crime. Eventually he found the idol turned upside down on its head in the pit. He washed and perfumed it and returned it to its usual place saying, "If I find out who did this to you, I will humiliate him." The following night the boys did the same to the idol. The old man recovered it, washed and perfumed it as he had done before and returned it to its place. This happened several times until one night Amr put a sword around the idol's neck and said to it: "O Manat, I don't know who is doing this to you. If you have any power of good in you, defend yourself against this evil. Here is a sword for you." The youths waited until Amr was fast asleep. They took the sword from the idol's neck and threw it into the pit. Amr found the idol lying face down in the pit with the sword nowhere in sight. At last he was convinced that the idol had no power at all and did not deserve to be worshipped. It was not long before he entered the religion of Islam. Amr soon tasted the sweetness of Iman or faith in the One True God. At the same time he felt great pain and anguish within himself at the thought of every moment he had spent in shirk. His

acceptance of the new religion was total and he placed himself, his wealth and his children in the service of God and His Prophet. The extent of his devotion was shown during the time of the battle of Uhud. Amr saw his three sons preparing for the battle. He looked at the three determined young men fired by the desire to gain martyrdom, success and the pleasure of God. The scene had a great effect on him and he resolved to go out with them to wage jihad under the banner of the messenger of God. The youths, however, were all against their father carrying out his resolve. He was already quite old and was extremely weak. "Father," they said, "surely God has excused you. So why do you take this burden on yourself?" The old man became quite angry and went straight away to the Prophet to complain about his sons: "O Rasulullah! My sons here want to keep me away from this source of goodness arguing that I am old and decrepit. By God, I long to attain Paradise this way even though I am old and infirm." "Let him," said the Prophet to his sons. "Perhaps God, the Mighty and the Great, will grant him martyrdom." Soon it was time to go out to battle. Amr bade farewell to his wife, turned to the qiblah and prayed: "O Lord, grant me martyrdom and don't send me back to my family with my hopes dashed." He set out in the company of his three sons and a large contingent from his tribe, the Banu Salamah. As the battle raged, Amr could be seen moving in the front ranks, jumping on his good leg (his other leg was partially lame), and shouting, "I desire Paradise, I desire Paradise." His son Khallad remained closely behind him and they both fought courageously in defense of the Prophet while many other Muslims deserted in pursuit of booty. Father and son fell on the battlefield and died within moments of each other.

## [An-Nuayman ibn Amr](#)

### **An-Nuayman ibn Amr**

In spite of the fact that he fought in the battles of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq and other major encounters, an-Nuayman remained a light-hearted person who was quick at repartee and who loved to play practical jokes on others.

He belonged to the Banu an-Najjar of Madinah and he was among the early Muslims of the city. He was one of those who pledged allegiance to the Prophet at the Second Pledge of Aqabah. He established links with the Quraysh when he married the sister of Abdur Rahman ibn Awl and later Umm Kulthum the daughter of Uqbah ibn Mu'ayt. She had obtained a divorce from her husband az-Zubayr ibn al-Awwam on account of his harshness and severity.

Unfortunately for a time an-Nuayman became addicted to alcohol. He was caught drinking and the Prophet had him flogged. He was caught a second time and then he had him flogged again. Because he still did not give up the habit, the Prophet ordered that he be flogged with shoes. When all this did not persuade him to stop drinking, the Prophet finally said: "If he goes back (to drinking) then kill him."

This was a severe Pronouncement and Umayr, one of the companions of the Prophet, understood from it that should he return to the drinking of alcohol, an-Nuayman would go outside the pale of Islam and deserve death. Umayr gave vent to his anger and disgust by saying: "La 'nat Allah alayhi - may God's curse be on him."

The Prophet heard Umayr's imprecation and said: "No, no, don't do (such a thing). Indeed he loves God and His Apostle. The major sin (as this) does not put one outside the community and the mercy of God is close to the believers."

While being firm, the Prophet still held out hope for an-Nuayman's reform especially on account of his past sacrifices as a veteran of Badr. Because he was not someone who went out of his way to conceal his actions, it was easier for him to acknowledge his crimes and repent and seek forgiveness from God. This he did and he won the favor of the Prophet and his companions who enjoyed his pleasantries and his infectious laughter.

Once an-Nuayman went to the suq and saw some food being sold which appeared to be tasty and delightful. He ordered some and sent it to the Prophet as if it were a gift from him. The Prophet was delighted with the food and he and his family ate of it. The vendor of the food then came to an-Nuayman to collect the price of it and an-Nuayman said to him: "Go to the Messenger of God it was for him. He and his family ate it."

The vendor went to the Prophet who in turn asked an-Nuayman: "Didn't you give it to me?" "Yes," said an-Nuayman. "I thought you would like it and I wanted you to eat some of it so I had it presented to you. But I don't have any dirhams to pay the vendor for it. So, pay, O Messenger of God!"

The Prophet had a good laugh and so did his companions. The laugh was at his expense, literally, for he had to pay the price of the unsolicited gift. An-Nuayman felt that two benefits came out of the incident: the Prophet and his family ate food that they enjoyed and the Muslims had a good laugh.

Once Abu Bakr and some companions went on a trading expedition to Busra. Various people on the trip were given fixed duties. Suwaybit ibn Harmalah was made responsible for food and provisions. An-Nuayman was one of the group and on the way he became hungry and asked Suwaybit for some food. Suwaybit refused and an-Nuayman said to him:

"Do you know what I would yet do with you?" and went on to warn and threaten him but still Suwaybit refused. An-Nuayman then went to a group of Arabs in the suq and said to them: "Would you like to have a strong and sturdy slave whom I can sell to you." They said yes and an-Nuayman went on: "He has got a ready tongue and is very articulate. He would resist you and say: 'I am free.' But don't

listen to him"

The men paid the price of the slave - ten qala'is (pieces of gold) and an-Nuayman accepted it and appeared to complete the transaction with business-like efficiency. The buyers accompanied him to fetch the purchase. Pointing to Suwaybit, he said: "This is the slave whom I sold to you."

The men took hold of Suwaybit and he shouted for dear life and freedom. "I am free. I am Suwaybit ibn Harmalah..."

But they paid no attention to him and dragged him off by the neck as they would have done with any slave.

All the while, an-Nuayman did not laugh or bicker an eyelid. He remained completely calm and serious while Suwaybit continued to protest bitterly. Suwaybit's fellow travellers, realizing what was happening, rushed to fetch Abu Bakr, the leader of the caravan, who came running as fast as he could. He explained to the purchasers what had happened and so they released Suwaybit and had their money returned. Abu Bakr then laughed heartily and so did Suwaybit and an-Nuayman. Back in Madinah, when the episode was recounted to the Prophet and his companions, they all laughed even more.

A man once came to the Prophet on a delegation and tethered his camel at the door of the Masjid. The Sahabah noticed that the camel had a large fat hump and their appetite for succulent tasty meat was stimulated. They turned to Nuayman and asked: "Would you deal with this camel?"

An-Nuayman understood what they meant. He got up and slaughtered the camel. The nomad Arab came out and realized what had happened when he saw people grilling, sharing out and eating meat. He shouted in distress: "Waa 'aqraah! Waa Naqataah! (O my camel!)"

The Prophet heard the commotion and came out. He learnt from the Sahabah what had happened and began searching for an-Nuayman but did not find him. Afraid of being blamed and punished, an-Nuayman had fled. The Prophet then followed his footprints. These led to a garden belonging to Danbaah the daughter of az-Zubayr, a cousin of the Prophet. He asked the companions where an-Nuayman was. Pointing to a nearby ditch, they said loudly so as not to alert an-Nuayman: "We haven't found him, O Messenger of God."

An-Nuayman was found in the ditch covered with palm branches and leaves and emerged with dirt on his head, beard and face. He stood in the presence of the Prophet who took him by the head and dusted the dirt from his face while he chuckled with laughter. The companions joined in the mirth. The Prophet paid the price of the camel to its owner and they all joined in the feast.

The Prophet obviously regarded an-Nuayman's pranks for what they were light-hearted sallies that were meant to create some relief and laughter. The religion of Islam does not require people to disdain seemly laughter and levity and remain perpetually gloomy. An appropriate sense of humor is often a saving grace.

An-Nuayman lived on after the Prophet and continued to enjoy the affection of Muslims. But did he put an end to his laughter? During the caliphate of Uthman, a group of Sahabah were sitting in the Masjid. They saw Makhramah ibn Nawfal, an old man who was about one hundred and fifteen years old and obviously rather senile. He was related to the sister of Abdur-Rahman ibn Awl, who was a wife of an-Nuayman.

Makhramah was blind. He was so weak that he could hardly move from his place in the Masjid. He got up to urinate and might have done so in the Masjid. But the companions shouted at him to prevent him from doing so.. An-Nuayman got up and went to take him to another place, as he was instructed. What is this other place that an-Nuayman took him to? In fact he took him only a short distance away from where he was sitting at first and sat him down. The place was still in the Masjid!

People shouted at Makhramah and made him get up again all in a frenzy. The poor old man was distressed and said: "Who has done this?" "An-Nuayman ibn Amr," he was told.

The old man swore and announced that he would bash an-Nuayman on the head with his stick if he should meet him.

An-Nuayman left and returned. He was up to some prank of his again. He saw Uthman ibn Affan, the Amir al-Muminim, performing Salat in the Masjid. Uthman was never distracted when he stood for Prayer. An-Nuayman also saw Makhramah. He went up to him and in a changed voice said: "Do you want to get at an-Nuayman?"

The old man remembered what an-Nuayman had done. He remembered his vow and shouted: "Yes, where is he?" An-Nuayman took him by the hand and led him to the place where the Khalifah Uthman stood and said to him: "Here he is!"

The old man raised his staff and bashed the head of Uthman. Blood flowed and the people shouted: "It's the Amir al-Muminin!"

The dragged Makhramah away and some people set out to get an-Nuayman but Uthman restrained them and asked them to leave him alone. In spite of the blows he had suffered, he was still able to laugh at the deeds of an-Nuayman.

An-Nuayman lived up to the time of Muawiyah when fitnah saddened him and discord filled him with anguish. He lost his levity and laughed no more.

## An Numan Ibn Muqarrin

### **An Numan Ibn Muqarrin**

The tribe of Muzaynah had their habitations some distance from Yathrib on the caravan route which linked the city to Makkah. News of the Prophet's arrival in Yathrib spread rapidly and soon reached the Muzaynah through members of the tribe who had left and returned.

One evening the chieftain of the tribe, an-Numan ibn Maqarrin, sat among the elders and other members of the tribe and addressed them:

"O my people, by God, we have learnt only good about Muhammad, and of His mission we have heard nothing but mercy, kindness and justice. What's wrong with us? Why do we tarry while people are hastening to him?" "As for myself," he continued, "I have made up my mind to leave early in the morning to join him. Whoever of you wishes to go with me, let him get ready."

An-Numan must have been a persuasive chieftain. His words had a wondrous effect on the ears of his people. The following morning an-Numan's ten brothers and four hundred horsemen of the Muzaynah were all ready and prepared to go with him to Yathrib to meet the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, and enter the religion of Islam.

An-Numan however felt embarrassed to go to the Prophet with such a numerous following without carrying any presents for him and the Muslims. There wasn't much he could carry anyway. That year was a year of drought and famine for the Muzaynah and much of their livestock and crops had perished. Still, an-Numan went around the dwellings of his fellow tribesmen and gathered up whatever sheep and goats were left. These he drove before him and made his way to Madinah. There in the presence of the Prophet, he and his fellow tribesmen announced their acceptance of Islam.

The whole of Madinah was agog with excitement with the coming of an-Numan and his companions. Never before had there been a single family with all eleven brothers accepting Islam at the same time together with four hundred horsemen. The noble Prophet was exceedingly glad and rejoiced greatly. Indeed the sincerity of their effort was accepted and commended by God Almighty when He revealed the following words of the Quran to the Prophet:

"And among the nomad Arabs are such as believe in God and the Last Day, and regard all that they spend in God's cause as a means of drawing them nearer to God and of (their being remembered in) the Apostle's prayers. Oh, verily, it shall (indeed) be a means of (God's) nearness to them, (for) God will admit them into

His grace. Verily God is much-Forgiving, most Merciful." (The Quran, Surah at-Tawbah, 9:99).

An-Numan lived under the guidance of the Prophet and participated in all the campaigns he waged with valor and dedication. In the time of Abu Bakr, he and the people of Muzaynah played a major and commendable role in putting an end to the fitnah of apostasy. During the caliphate of Umar al-Faruq, an-Numan distinguished himself, in particular, in the encounters with the Sasanian Empire.

Shortly before the Battle of Qadisiyyah, the commander of the Muslim forces Sad ibn Abi Waqqas sent a delegation to the Sasanian Emperor, Yazdagird. The delegation was headed by an-Numan ibn Muqarrin and its main purpose was to invite the emperor of Islam. When an-Numan and his delegation reached Ctesiphon, the Sasanian capital, the people of the city looked upon them with curiosity and some disdain. They remarked on their simple appearance, their rough clothes and shoes and their weak-looking horses. The Muslims were in no way overwhelmed and sought an audience with Yazdagird. He granted them permission, summoned an interpreter and said to him:

"Say to them (the Muslims): why have you come to our dominions and why do you want to invade us? Perhaps, you have designs on us... and seek to venture against us because we are preoccupied with you. But we do not wish to inflict punishment on you." An-Numan turned to his men and said:

"If you wish, I shall reply to him on your behalf. But if any one of you wants to speak let him do so first." The Muslims told an-Numan to speak and turning to the Emperor, said:

"This man speaks with our tongue so do listen to what he says." An-Numan began by praising and glorifying God and invoking peace and blessings on His Prophet. Then he said:

"Indeed God has been Kind and Merciful to us and has sent to us a Messenger to show us the good and command us to follow it; to make us realize what is evil and forbade us from it.

The Messenger promised us if we were to respond to what he summoned us, God would bestow on us the good of this world and the good of the hereafter. Not much time has elapsed but God has given us abundance in place of hardship, honor in place of humiliation and mercy and brotherhood in place of our former enmity.

The Messenger has commanded us to summon mankind to what is best for them and to begin with those who are our neighbors. We therefore invite you to enter into our religion. It is a religion which beautifies and promotes all good and which detests and discourages all that is ugly and reprehensible. It is a religion which leads its adherents from the darkness of tyranny and unbelief to the light and justice of faith.

Should you respond positively to us and come to Islam, it would be our duty to introduce the Book of God in your midst and help you to live according to it and rule according to its laws. We would then return and leave you to conduct your own affairs.

Should you refuse, however, to enter the religion of God, we would take the jizyah from you and give you protection in return. If you refuse to give the jizyah, we shall declare war on you.

Yazdagird was angry and furious at what he had heard and said in ridicule:

"Certainly I do not know of a nation on earth who is more wretched than you and whose numbers are so few, who are more divided and whose condition is more evil."

"We have been used to delegate your affairs to our provincial governors and they exacted obedience from you on our behalf."

Then softening his tone somewhat, he continued, but with greater sarcasm:

"If there is any need which has pushed you to come to us, we would enlist forces to help you make your lands fertile. We would clothe your leaders and the notables of your people and place a king from among ourselves over you who would be gentle to you."

One of an-Numan's delegation responded sharply to this and Yazdagird flew into a rage once more and shouted:

"Were it for the fact that ambassadors are not killed, I would kill you all. "Get up. You shall have nothing from me. And tell your commander that I am sending Rustum against him to bury him and you together in the ditch of al Qadisiyyah."

Yazdagird then called for a basketful of earth and ordered that it should be borne outside the city gates by the one whom the Muslims considered to be the most noble among them as a sign of humiliation. Asim the son of Umar accepted the load as a happy augury and took it to the commander-in-chief, Sad ibn Abi Waqqas, and said to him:

"Accept our congratulations for the victory. The enemy has voluntarily surrendered his territory to us."

The Battle of Qadisiyyah ensued and after four days of bitter fighting, the Muslim forces emerged victorious. The victory paved the way for the Muslim advance into the plains of the Euphrates and the Tigris. The Persian capital, Ctesiphon, fell and

this was followed by a number of engagements as the Persians withdrew northwards.

Despite other defeats and setbacks, Yazdagird refused to yield and constantly organized new levies to attack the Muslims and foment insurrection in the provinces which had come under Muslim control.

Umar had counselled moderation on his generals and ordered them not to press too far eastwards. However he received news of a massive Persian mobilization of about 150,000 warriors against the Muslims. He thought of leaving Madinah and facing the massive threat himself. He was advised against this by prominent Muslims in Madinah who suggested instead that he should appoint a military commander to confront the grave situation.

"Show me a man whom I can appoint for this task." said.

"You know your army best, O Amir al-Muminin," they replied and after some thought Umar exclaimed:

"By God, I shall appoint as commander-in-chief of the Muslim army a man who, when the two armies meet, will be the most active. He is an-Numan ibn Muqarrin al-Muzani." To him, Umar despatched a letter: "From the servant of God,

Umar ibn al-Khattab, to an-Numan ibn Muqarrin:

"I have received news that large numbers of Persians have gathered to fight you in the city of Nihawand. When this my letter reaches you go forward (to confront them) with the help of God, with whoever of the Muslims are with you. Don't take the Muslims over too difficult terrain lest they may be hurt, for one Muslim person is dearer to me than a hundred thousand dinars. And Peace be unto you."

An-Numan responded to the orders of the Amir al-Muminin and mobilized the Muslim forces. He despatched an advanced detachment of cavalry to reconnoiter the approaches of the city. Just outside Nihawand, the horses stopped and despite prodding would go no further. The riders dismounted and discovered iron nails in the horses' hooves. They looked around and found that all approaches to the city were strewn with these iron spikes to halt the advance of the Muslim army. On being informed of this, an-Numan ordered the horsemen to remain where they were and at nightfall to light fires for the enemy to see them.

They were also to feign fear and defeat in order to entice the enemy to come out to them and in the process clear the approaches of the iron spikes. The ruse worked. When the Persians saw the van guard of the Muslim army appearing dejected and

defeated before them, they sent workers to clear the area of the spikes. These workers were captured by the Muslim cavalry who gained control of the approaches to the city.

An-Numan pitched camp on the outskirts of the city and decided to make a determined assault on the city. He addressed his soldiers: "I shall say Allahu Akbar three times. At the first time, get Yourselves ready (by performing your toilet and making wudu). At the second time, let every man of you get ready his weapons and gird them on. And the third time, I shall move against the enemies of God and you must join in the attack with me." He went on:

"And if an-Numan is killed, let no one tarry over him. For I shall (now) make a supplication to God Almighty and I want everyone of you to say 'Ameen'. "He then prayed: "May God grant martyrdom to an-Numan this day and may He grant victory to the Muslims."

Three times an-Numan shouted Allahu Akbar. On the third time, he plunged into the ranks of the enemies and the Muslims rushed on behind him. They were outnumbered six to one but inflicted terrible losses on the Persians. An-Numan received a mortal blow during the battle. His brother took the standard from his hand, and covered him with a burdah and concealed his death from the others.

The Muslim forces emerged victorious. The Persians never recovered themselves after this battle which Muslim historians have called "the Victory of Victories". The battle over, the victorious soldiers asked for their valiant commander. His brother lifted the burdab and said: "This is your Amir. God has shown him victory and blessed him with martyrdom."

When the news was brought to Umar in Madinah, a companion who was with him said: "I saw Umar, may God be pleased with him. When he heard of the death of an-Numan ibn Muqarrin, he placed his head in his hands and began to cry."

## **Assma bint Abu Bakr**

### **Assma bint Abu Bakr**

Asmaa bint Abu Bakr belonged to a distinguished Muslim family. Her father, Abu Bakr, was a close friend of the Prophet and the first Khalifah after his death. Her halfsister, Aishah, was a wife of the Prophet and one of the Ummahat al-Mumineen. Her husband, Zubayr ibn al-Awwam, was one of the special personal aides of the Prophet. Her son, Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr, became well known for his incorruptibility and his unswerving devotion to Truth.

Asma herself was one of the first persons to accept Islam. Only about seventeen persons including both men and women became Muslims before her. She was later given the nickname Dhat an-Nitaqayn (the One with the Two Waistbands) because of an incident connected with the departure of the Prophet and her father from Makkah on the historic hijrah to Madinah.

Asma was one of the few persons who knew of the Prophet's plan to leave for Madinah. The utmost secrecy had to be maintained because of the Quraysh plans to murder the Prophet. On the night of their departure, Asmaa was the one who prepared a bag of food and a water container for their journey. She did not find anything though with which to tie the containers and decided to use her waistband or nitaq. Abu Bakr suggested that she tear it into two. This she did and the Prophet commended her action. From then on she became known as "the One with the Two Waistbands".

When the final emigration from Makkah to Madinah took place soon after the departure of the Prophet, Asmaa was pregnant. She did not let her pregnancy or the prospect of a long and arduous journey deter her from leaving. As soon as she reached Quba on the outskirts of Madinah, she gave birth to a son, Abdullah. The Muslims shouted Allahu Akbar (God is the Greatest) and Laa ilaaha illa Allah (There is no God but Allah) in happiness and thanksgiving because this was the first child to be born to the muhajireen in Madinah.

Asma became known from her fine and noble qualities and for the keenness of her intelligence. She was an extremely generous person. Her son Abdullah once said of her, "I have not seen two women more generous than my aunt Aishah and my mother Asmaa. But their generosity was expressed in different ways. My aunt would accumulate one thing after another until she had gathered what she felt was sufficient and then distributed it all to those in need. My mother, on the other hand, would not keep anything even for the morrow."

Asma's presence of mind in difficult circumstances was remarkable. When her father left Makkah, he took all his wealth, amounting to some six thousand dirhams, with him and did not leave any for his family. When Abu Bakr's father, Abu Quhafah (he was still a mushrik) heard of his departure he went to his house and said to Asmaa:

"I understand that he has left you bereft of money after he himself has abandoned you."

"No, grandfather," replied Asmaa, "in fact he has left us much money." She took some pebbles and put them in a small recess in the wall where they used to put money. She threw a cloth over the heap and took the hand of her grandfather--he was blind--and said, "See how much money he has left us".

Through this stratagem, Asmaa wanted to allay the fears of the old man and to

forestall him from giving them anything of his own wealth. This was because she disliked receiving any assistance from a mushrikeen if it was her own grandfather.

She had a similar attitude to her mother and was not inclined to compromise her honor and her faith. Her mother, Qutaylah, once came to visit her in Madinah. She was not a Muslim and was divorced from her father in pre-Islamic times. Her mother brought her gifts of raisins, clarified butter and qaraz (pods of a species of sant tree).

Asma at first refused to admit her into her house or accept the gifts. She sent someone to Aishah to ask the Prophet, peace be upon him, about her attitude to her mother and he replied that she should certainly admit her to her house and accept the gifts. On this occasion, the following revelation came to the Prophet:

"God forbids you not, with regard to those who do not fight you because of your faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them. God loves those who are just. God only forbids you with regard to those who fight you for your Faith, and drive you from your homes, and support others in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection). It is such as turn to them (in these circumstances) that do wrong." (Surah al-Mumtahanah 60: 8-9).

For Asmaa and indeed for many other Muslims, life in Madinah was rather difficult at first. Her husband was quite poor and his only major possession to begin with was a horse he had bought. Asma a herself described these early days:

"I used to provide fodder for the horse, give it water and groom it. I would grind grain and make dough but I could not bake well. The women of the Ansar used to bake for me. They were truly good women. I used to carry the grain on my head from az-Zubayr's plot which the Prophet had allocated to him to cultivate. It was about three farsakh (about eight kilo meters) from the town's center. One day I was on the road carrying the grain on my head when I met the Prophet and a group of Sahabah. He called out to me and stopped his camel so that I could ride behind him. I felt embarrassed to travel with the Prophet and also remembered az-Zubayr's jealousy, he was the most jealous of men. The Prophet realized that I was embarrassed and rode on."

Later, Asmaa related to az-Zubayr exactly what had happened and he said, "By God, that you should have to carry grain is far more distressing to me than your riding with (the Prophet)".

Asma a obviously then was a person of great sensitivity and devotion. She and her husband worked extremely hard together until their situation of poverty gradually changed. At times, however, az-Zubayr treated her harshly. Once she went to her father and complained to him about this. His reply to her was: 'My daughter, have sabr for if a woman has a righteous husband and he dies and she does not marry after him, they will be brought together again in Paradise.'

Az-Zubayr eventually became one of the richest men among the Sahabah but Asmaa did not allow this to corrupt her principles. Her son, al-Mundhir once sent her an elegant dress from Iraq made of fine and costly material. Asmaa by this time was blind. She felt the material and said, "It's awful. Take it back to him".

Al-Mundhir was upset and said, "Mother. it was not transparent . "

"It may not be transparent," she retorted, "but it is too tight fitting and shows the contours of the body."

Al-Mundhir bought another dress that met with her approval and she accepted it. If the above incidents and aspects of Asmaas life may easily be forgotten, then her final meeting with her son, Abdullah, must remain one of the most unforgettable moments in early Muslim history. At that meeting she demonstrated the keenness of her intelligence, her resoluteness and the strength of her faith.

Abdullah was in the running for the Caliphate after the death of Yazid ibn Muawiyah. The Hijaz, Egypt, Iraq, Khurasan and much of Syria were favorable to him and acknowledged him as the Caliph. The Umayyads however continued to contest the Caliphate and to field a massive army under the command of Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi. Relentless battles were fought between the two sides during which Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr displayed great acts of courage and heroism. Many of his supporters however could not withstand the continuous strain of battle and gradually began to desert him. Finally he sought refuge in the Sacred Mosque at Makkah. It was then that he went to his mother, now an old blind woman, and said:

"Peace be on you, Mother, and the mercy and blessings of God."

"Unto you be peace, Abdullah," she replied.

"What is it that brings you here at this hour while boulders from Hajjaj's catapults are raining down on your soldiers in the Haram and shaking the houses of Makkah?"

"I came to seek your advice," he said.

"To seek my advice?" she asked in astonishment. "About what?"

"The people have deserted me out of fear of Hajjaj or being tempted by what he has to offer. Even my children and my family have left me. There is only a small group of men with me now and however strong and steadfast they are they can only resist for an hour or two more. Messengers of the Banu Umayyah (the Umayyads) are now negotiating with me, offering to give me whatever worldly possessions I want, should I lay down my arms and swear allegiance to Abdul Malik ibn Marwan. What do you think?"

Raising her voice, she replied: "It's your affair, Abdullah, and you know yourself better. If however you think that you are right and that you are standing up for the Truth, then persevere and fight on as your companions who were killed under your flag had shown perseverance. If however you desire the world, what a miserable wretch you are. You would have destroyed yourself and you would have destroyed your men."

"But I will be killed today, there is no doubt about it."

"That is better for you than that you should surrender yourself to Hajjaj voluntarily and that some minions of Banu Umayyah should play with your head."

"I do not fear death. I am only afraid that they will mutilate me."

"There is nothing after death that man should be afraid of. Skinning does not cause any pain to the slaughtered sheep."

Abdullah's face beamed as he said: "What a blessed mother! Blessed be your noble qualities! I have come to you at this hour to hear what I have heard. God knows that I have not weakened or despaired. He is witness over me that I have not stood up for what I have out of love for this world and its attractions but only out of anger for the sake of God. His limits have been transgressed. Here am I, going to what is pleasing to you. So if I am killed, do not grieve for me and commend me to God."

"I shall grieve for you," said the aging but resolute Asmaa, "only if you are killed in a vain and unjust cause."

"Be assured that your son has not supported an unjust cause, nor committed any detestable deed, nor done any injustice to a Muslim or a Dhimmī and that there is nothing better in his sight than the pleasure of God, the Mighty, the Great. I do not say this to exonerate myself. God knows that I have only said it to make your heart firm and steadfast. "

"Praise be to God who has made you act according to what He likes and according to what I like. Come close to me, my son, that I may smell and feel your body for this might be the last meeting with you."

Abdullah knelt before her. She hugged him and smothered his head, his face and his neck with kisses. Her hands began to squeeze his body when suddenly she withdrew them and asked:

"What is this you are wearing, Abdullah?"

"This is my armor plate."

"This, my son, is not the dress of one who desires martyrdom. Take it off. That will

make your movements lighter and quicker. Wear instead the sirwal (a long under garment) so that if you are killed your awrah will not be exposed. Abdullah took off his armor plate and put on the sirwal. As he left for the Haram to join the fighting he said: "My mother, don't deprive me of your dua (prayer)."

Raising her hands to heaven, she prayed:

"O Lord, have mercy on his staying up for long hours and his loud crying in the darkness of the night while people slept...

"O Lord, have mercy on his hunger and his thirst on his Journeys from Madinah and Makkah while he fasted...

"O Lord, bless his righteousness to his mother and his father...

"O Lord, I commend him to Your cause and I am pleased with whatever You decree for him. And grant me for his sake the reward of those who are patient and who persevere."

By sunset, Abdullah was dead. Just over ten days later, his mother joined him. She was a hundred years old. Age had not made her infirm nor blunted the keenness of her mind.

## **At-Tufayl ibn Amr ad-Dawsi**

### **At-Tufayl ibn Amr ad-Dawsi**

At-Tufayl ibn Amr was the chief of the Daws tribe in pre Quranic times and a distinguished Arab notable known for his manly virtues and good works.

He fed the hungry, comforted those in distress and granted asylum to refugees. He was also keenly interested in literature and was himself a sharp and sensitive poet capable of expressing the most delicate emotions.

Tufayl left the hearths of his village in Tihama in the south of the Arabian peninsula and set out for Makkah. The struggle between the noble Prophet and the disbelieving Quraysh was already at its height. Each wanted to gain support for his cause and recruit helpers. The Prophet, peace and blessings of God be on him, sought help from his Lord. His weapons were faith and truth. The disbelieving Quraysh resisted his message with every weapon, and attempted to keep people away from it by all the means at their disposal.

Tufayl found himself entering this battle without any preparation or warning. He did not come to Makkah to get involved in it. Indeed he was not aware of the struggle that was taking place.

Let Tufayl himself take up the story from this point:

I approached Makkah. As soon as the Quraysh leaders saw me, they came up to me and gave me a most hearty welcome and accommodated me in a grand house. Their leaders and notables then gathered and said:

"O Tufayl, you have come to our town. This man who claims that he is a Prophet has ruined our authority and shattered our community. We are afraid that he would succeed in undermining you and your authority among your people just as he has done with us. Don't speak to the man. On no account listen to anything he has to say. He has the speech of a wizard, causing division between father and son, between brother and brother and between husband and wife."

They went on telling me the most fantastic stories and scared me by recounting tales of his incredible deeds. I made up my mind then not to approach this man, or speak to him or listen to anything he had to say.

The following morning I went to the Sacred Mosque to make tawaf around the Kabah as an act of worship to the idols that we made pilgrimage to and glorified. I inserted a piece of cotton in my ears out of fear that something of the speech of Muhammad would reach my hearing. As soon as I entered the Mosque, I saw him standing near the Kabah. He was praying in a fashion which was different from our prayer. His whole manner of worship was different. The scene captivated me. His worship made me tremble and I felt drawn to him, despite myself, until I was quite close to him.

Notwithstanding the precaution I had taken, God willed that some of what he was saying should reach my hearing and I heard a speech that was so beautiful that I said to myself, "What are you doing, Tufayl? You are a perceptive poet. You can distinguish between the good and the bad in poetry. What prevents you from listening to what this man is saying? If what comes from him is good, accept it, and if it is bad, reject it."

I remained there until the Prophet left for his home. I followed him as he entered his house, and I entered also and said, "O Muhammad, your people have said certain things to me about you. By God, they kept on frightening me away from your message so that I even blocked my ears to keep out your words. Despite this, God caused me to hear something of it and I found it good. So tell me more about your mission."

The Prophet, peace be upon him, did and recited to me Surah Al-Iklaas and Surah Al-Falaq. I swear by God, I had never heard such beautiful words before. Neither was a more noble or just mission ever described to me. Thereupon, I stretched out my hand to him in allegiance and testified that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. This is how I entered Islam.

I stayed on for some time in Makkah learning the teachings of Islam memorizing parts of the Quran. When I decided to return to my people, I said, "O Rasulullah. I am a man who is obeyed in his tribe. I am going back to them and I shall invite them to Islam . . ."

When I returned to my people, my father, who was quite old then, came up to me and I said, 'O Father, let me relate my news to you. I am no longer from you and you are not of me.'

"Why so, my son?" he asked.

"I have accepted Islam and now follow the religion of Muhammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him," I replied.

"My son," he said, "your religion is my religion."

"Go and wash your sell and cleanse your clothes," I said. "Then come that I may teach you what I have learnt."

This the old man did and I explained Islam to him and he became a Muslim.

"Then came my wife and I said, "Let me relate my news to you. I am no longer of you and you are not of me."

"Good heavens! Why so?" she exclaimed.

"Islam has separated us," I explained. "I have become a Muslim and follow the religion of Muhammad."

"Your religion is my religion," she replied.

'Then go and purify yourself, not with the water of Dhu Shara, the idol of the Daws, but with pure water from the mountain. "

"Good gracious! Do you fear anything from Dhu Shara?"

"Damn Dhu Shari. I told you, go and wash there, far away from people. I guarantee you that this dumb stone won't do a thing to you."

She went and washed and I explained Islam to her and she became a Muslim. I then invited the Daws as a whole to become Muslims. They were all slow in responding, except Abu Hurayrah. He was the quickest to respond to the invitation of Islam.

The next time I went to Makkah, Abu Hurayrah was with me.

"What have you left behind?" the Prophet asked me.

"Hearts with veils over them obscuring the Truth, and firm disbelief. Sin and disobedience have won over the Daws."

The Prophet thereupon stood up, made wudu and prayed with his hands raised to the heavens. Abu Hurayrah remarked, "When I saw the Prophet like this, I was afraid that he was praying against my people and that they would be destroyed."

But the Prophet, upon whom be peace, prayed, "O Lord, guide the Daws, guide the Daws, guide the Daws." Then he turned to me and said:

"Go back to your people, befriend them, treat them gently and invite them to Islam."

I stayed in the land of the Daws inviting them to Islam until after the hijrah of the Prophet to Madinah and after the battle of Badr, Uhud and Khandaq had taken place. Then I went to the Prophet. With me were eighty families who had become Muslims and who were strong in their faith. The Prophet was pleased with us and he gave us a portion of the booty after the battle of Khaybar. We said to him, "O Rasulullah, make us the right wing of your army in every battle and make our efforts acceptable."

Tufayl stayed with the Prophet until the liberation of Makkah. After the destruction of the idols there, Tufayl asked the Prophet to send him to put an end to the worship of Dhu-l Kafayn, the chief idol of his people. The Prophet gave him permission.

Back in Tihama among the Daws, men, women and children of the tribe had gathered and were agitated that the idol was going to be burnt. They were waiting to see if any evil would befall Tufayl should he harm Dhu-l Kafayn. Tufayl approached the idols with the worshipers around it. As he set fire to it, he proclaimed:

"O Dhu-l Kafayn, of your worshipers I certainly am not.

Fire have I inserted into your heart."

Whatever shirk remained in the Daws tribe went up in the flames that burnt the idol. The whole tribe became Muslims.

Tufayl remained a lieutenant of the Prophet until the noble messenger passed away. Tufayl then placed himself in the service of the Khalifah Abu Bakr, the successor of the Prophet. During the Riddah wars, he led a contingent of his people against the impostor Musaylamah.

In the battle of al-Yamamah that followed, the dear companion of the Prophet, Tufayl ibn Amr fought hard but eventually fell as a martyr on the battlefield.

**END**